

A bold commitment to Indiana's

youngest citizens



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By the time a child arrives for Kindergarten, **90 percent** of the brain is developed.

*Zero to Three, 2003*

90

It is estimated that nationally, as many as **50 percent** of children are not fully prepared to succeed when they enter Kindergarten.

*Early Education Trust, 2003*

50

Research shows that for every government dollar invested in high-quality, comprehensive early care and education, society saves **\$7.16** in welfare, special education and criminal justice costs.

*National Institute for Early Education Research, 2003*

*Institute for Research and Poverty study, 2002*

7

The **Early Learning Trust** is Indiana's effort to strengthen early education **and** continue developing a world-class workforce. The Early Learning Trust is a bold commitment to early learning and ensuring all Hoosier children enter school ready and able to succeed for the future.

### The Trust will:

- **Support parents as a child's first and most important teacher.** Parents deserve to have the latest information available on what they can do to promote healthy brain development. The Trust will focus on educating parents from before their baby is born through the school years.
- **Focus on reading and family literacy.** The Trust will increase parental and family involvement in teaching and encouraging reading, promote family and caregiver literacy practices and programs to help every student become a successful, independent reader.
- **Provide pre-Kindergarten programs for all at-risk children.** Giving all children access to high-quality pre-K is one of the most effective ways to improve academic success and tackle these challenges early.
- **Expand voluntary full-day Kindergarten immediately.** Through current funding, 6,000 children are benefiting from full-day Kindergarten in Indiana. The Trust will make voluntary full-day Kindergarten available to an additional 20,000 students beginning THIS fall, focusing first on Hoosier children at-risk.

### Early Learning Calendar

#### 2004

Full-day Kindergarten will be expanded to an additional 20,000 Hoosier children.

#### 2005

Pre-school for at-risk children will be piloted.

#### 2006

Pre-school piloting will be expanded.

#### 2007

Voluntary full-day Kindergarten for all and continued expansion of pre-school.

*Support for parents as a child's first and most important teacher and family literacy efforts will begin immediately and be on-going.*

### Three R's of the Early Learning Trust

#### Redirect

The General Assembly will be asked in the 2004 session to make an initial investment in The Early Learning Trust by redirecting an available \$30 million in lottery and gaming revenue from the state's Pension Stabilization Fund and \$11.5 million in receipts from the Common School Fund each year for three years. Even with this redirection, the state will still meet obligations to Indiana's retired teachers.

#### Reallocate

To provide additional investment in early learning and school readiness, the plan calls on legislators and Indiana citizens to bring the Common School Fund into alignment with early learning needs and priorities of Indiana by adopting a state constitutional amendment. This plan requires legislative approval of the amendment in 2004 and 2005, as well as voter approval in Nov. 2006.

#### Reinvest

To provide the long-term sustainability of these efforts, the General Assembly will be asked to reinvest funds recovered from the 3 percent decrease in K-12 enrollment projected by the U.S. Dept. of Education between 2005 and 2012.